

MATERIALS

1. PowerPoint slides or posters of:
 - Experiential Learning Model
 - 4-H Skillathons
2. Supplies for “Books Tell a Story” Activity from “A Palette of Fun with Arts and Crafts” including:
 - large sheets of drawing paper
 - colored card stock or other heavy paper for book covers
 - cord, yarn, string, or ribbon
 - scissors
 - glue for fabric and/or paper
 - pencils
 - markers, colored pencils or crayons
 - colored paper scraps
3. Items needed to complete specific skillathon tasks. See examples of skillathon stations with instructions and necessary materials in the Appendix.
4. Copies of Appendix, Lesson 8 handouts if participants are not receiving 4-H 101 curriculum

OBJECTIVES

1. Participate in a 4-H experiential learning activity.
2. Describe characteristics of a skillathon teaching method.

Note to Instructor

Examples of skillathons and specific instructions are located in the Appendix. Use a variety of skillathons that appeal to different learning styles, i.e., visual, tactile, etc. Choose activities that require individual effort as well as group solutions. Skillathons are best conducted with a facilitator at each site to assist participants.

TIME

1 hour 30 minutes
(depending upon number of skillathons)

LESSON 8

Putting the Experiential Learning Model to Practice

4-H PRKC: Youth Development (domain): Youth Development Practice (topic)

WHAT TO DO

Before beginning the lesson, set up skillathon stations and ask station facilitators to acquaint themselves with the “Skillathon Guidelines Handout” in the appendix. Prepare supplies for the “Books Tell a Story” Activity

Make a Book

Cut a strip of 5.25” x 17” paper for each participant. When folded, this will form the book pages.

Cut two pieces of 4.25” x 5.5” card stock or heavy paper for each participant. These will form the front and back covers of the book.

Make a sample book prior to the lesson. (*See below for specific instructions.*)

Introduce the “Books Tell a Story” Activity by showing them the sample book you made prior to the lesson.

Tell participants that although everyone is making their own book, they may work together in small groups if they choose.

Give each participant one of the 5.25” x 17” sheets of paper to use as book pages and two card stock pages to use as cover pages.

WHAT TO SAY

In the last lesson we talked about the necessity of using different teaching techniques to appeal to all learning styles. Now, we are going to participate in some activities that use different techniques, but they all share experiential learning.

We are going to start with a teacher-directed activity that would appeal to youth who like to have detailed directions. The activity is taken from the 4-H “A Palette of Fun with Arts and Crafts” curriculum for grades K-6.

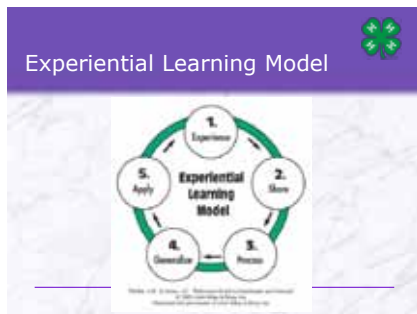
We are going to make an accordion book like the one I have here that will be used to record information in our next activity.

Fold the long strip of paper in half. Open and then fold each end in toward the centerfold by placing the edges at the centerfold crease.

WHAT TO DO

Allow about 15 minutes for participants to assemble their books.

Show PowerPoint slide or poster of the Experiential Learning Model.



Ask for volunteers to answer each question.

Allow about 10 minutes for discussion.

WHAT TO SAY

Open the sheet of paper and bend the creases as needed to form a fan shape. This will give you a front, back and four pages.

Now, I would like you to decorate the two pieces of card stock paper I gave you for the front and back of your book. You may use whatever you have at your station to decorate your book.

Next, I want you to run a bead of fabric glue across the horizontal middle of the front cover. Lay a piece of yarn over the glue line. Glue one end of the folded paper to the inside of the front cover. Glue the back cover to the other end of the folded paper. You can open the book like an accordion and tie the yarn around the book to close it.

Congratulations! You now have a completed book!

Let's process the activity we just finished using the Experiential Learning Model.

Share questions

What did we do?
What did you think when I said we were going to make a book?
How did you feel about the instructions you were given?
What part of making this book was the most fun?

Process questions

What did you learn as a group that you might not have learned alone?
What did you learn about communicating with others?
What was the most challenging part of the activity?

Generalize questions

What did you learn about helping a young person make a book?
What did you learn about the way you prefer to learn something new?
What did you learn about the learning style of others in the room?

WHAT TO DO

Divide the participants into groups of 4-5. Assign each group a skillathon station. The groups will rotate in a counterclockwise direction among stations in 10-minute intervals. Time needed will depend upon the number of skillathon stations. Place a facilitator at each skillathon station to ask processing questions during the last two minutes of the activity and to help guide the group. Remind the facilitators to allow the participants to first experience the activity on their own with minimal assistance from the facilitators.

Use a stop watch for keeping time. You may wish to give a two-minute warning before the 10-minute time limit is up. Instruct participants to take their books with them to keep notes on each activity.

Help groups find their stations and monitor the activities to insure that everyone is engaged as groups rotate from station to station.

WHAT TO SAY

Apply questions

What might you do with this book?
What uses could you suggest to youth for the book?

How will you use what you learned about your own learning style to approach another learning situation?

How will you use this activity with youth in your program?

We have just completed an activity in which the teacher led the learning experience and then conducted a discussion using the Experiential Learning Model.

Next, we are going to experience an entirely different activity that also uses the Experiential Learning Model. This activity incorporates a variety of learning styles and is used often by 4-H volunteers and professional staff.

Take your books with you and use them to record notes or questions you might have as you move through the stations.

Keep in mind, that if you were doing this activity with a group of youth, you would need more time at each station to guide learners through their learning experience.

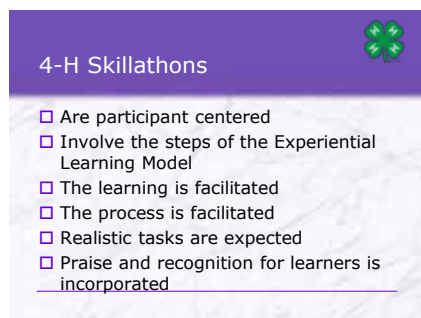
Now, I would like you to think about what you have just learned.

WHAT TO DO

When each group has completed all the skillathons, instruct participants to take a seat.

Tell participants that now they are going to process this activity using the Experiential Learning Model. Ask for volunteers to answer questions. Allow about 10-15 minutes for discussion.

Show PowerPoint slide or poster of 4-H Skillathons.



WHAT TO SAY

Share questions

What did you do in this workshop?
What was the most fun during this activity?
What did you observe during this activity?

Process questions

What did you learn as a group that you might not have learned alone?
What did you learn about communicating with others?
What was the most challenging part of this activity?
How does this workshop relate to 4-H project materials?

Generalize questions

What is one new thing you learned or experienced?
What did you learn about experiential learning methods?
What did you learn about setting up a skillathon?

Apply questions

How might you help youth learn based upon what you learned today?
What advice would you give someone who wants to do a skillathon to introduce projects to youth and parents?
What will you share with others from this workshop?

In closing, let's briefly review these important points about skillathons.

A skillathon:

Is participant centered.
It involves the steps of the Experiential Learning Model.
It sets up a situation for learning.
The learning is facilitated.
The process is facilitated.
Realistic tasks are expected.
Praise and recognition for learners is incorporated.

Because 4-H is a non-formal educational program and the youth in your program have different learning styles, it is important to provide experiences that support many learning styles. It is also important to be intentional in targeting skill development and to help youth recognize what they have learned. Skillathons are one way to accomplish that.